REMARKS / DISCUSSION OF ISSUES

Claims 4-7, 12, and 16-21 are pending in the application. Claims 16-21 are newly added, and find support at page 4 of the applicants' specification. Claims 8-11 and 13-15 are cancelled for being substantially redundant. .

The applicants thank the Examiner for acknowledging the claim for priority and receipt of certified copies of all the priority documents.

The Office action rejects claims 4-7 and 12 under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) over Gabai et al. (USP 5,752,880). The applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Claim 4, upon which claims 5-7 and 12 depend, claims a method that includes receiving identity information from an item and presenting a service field at a host in response to the identity information. As defined in the specification, a service field is "a particular information-related area pertaining to the item, such as a video game in which the item figures as a character, an audio story that is read from the host memory and may imply choices to be made by a listener, a video diary that may be kept and updated by the user person, and various others." (Applicants' specification, page 4, lines 1-5.)

Gabai teaches an animated toy that is controlled by a computer program on a host. As taught by Gabai, a computer program, such as a game, is run on a computer, and includes one or more animated characters. When a properly configured toy is brought in vicinity of the computer, the toy communicates identity information to the host computer, and, thereafter, the actions associated with the animated object that had been on the computer display are transferred to the toy. As Gabai teaches:

> "the computer 100 runs software comprising a computer game, typically a game including at least one animated character. Alternatively, the software may comprise educational software or any other interactive software including at least one animated object. As used herein, the term "animated object" includes any object which may be depicted on the computer screen 105 and which interacts with the user of the computer via input to and output from the computer. ... FIG. 2B depicts the situation after the toy 122 has

> been brought into range of the computer radio interface 110 of FIG. 1A, typically into the same room therewith. Preferably, the toy 122 corresponds to the animated object 160. For example, in FIG. 2B the toy 122 and the animated object 160, shown in FIG. 2A, are both a teddy bear... The computer 100, having received a message via the computer radio interface 110, from the toy 122, no longer displays the animated object 160 corresponding to the toy 122. The functions of the animated object 160 are now performed through the toy 122, under control of the computer 100 through the computer radio interface 110 and the toy control device 130." (Gabai, column 9, lines 10-44.)

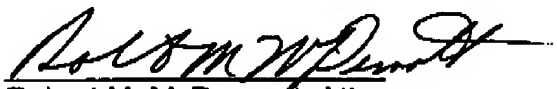
The applicants present a scheme for persons who are not fluent in computer operations, such as a young child, to operate a computer. The person brings an object (a toy, a token, etc.) to the computer, and, upon recognition of the object, a corresponding application program is initiated. The application program presents a service field to the user for operating the application program. By automating the initiation of a service field on a host computer for the non-computer-literate person to interact with, the non-computer-literate person is able to use the application program without having to know how to operate a computer.

Gabai assumes that the user, or someone associated with the user, is computer-literate, because Gabai assumes that the application program is already running on the computer when the toy is brought into proximity of the computer. When Gabai's toy is brought into the vicinity of the computer that is running the application program, the toy becomes controllable and replaces the animated character that is already on the computer screen. Gabai's toy does not cause a program to start to present a service field to the user; Gabai's toy requires that the program that controls an animated character is already running on the computer (Gabai, page 9, lines 10-12).

Because Gabia does not teach presenting a service field to a user in response to identity information from an item, as specifically claimed in claim 4, the applicants respectfully maintain that claims 4-7 and 12 are patentable under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) over Gabai.

In view of the foregoing, the applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw the rejections of record, allow all the pending claims, and find the application to be in condition for allowance. If any points remain in issue that may best be resolved through a personal or telephonic interview, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,



Robert M. McDermott, Attorney
Registration Number 41,508
patents@lawyer.com

1824 Federal Farm Road
Montross, VA 22520
Phone: 804-493-0707
Fax: 215-243-7525